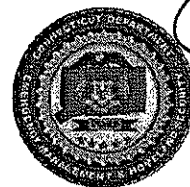




**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY**



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Public Hearing – March 3, 2011
Public Safety and Security Committee

Testimony Submitted by:
Commissioner Peter J. Boynton
Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

Good Morning Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on two bills before you today.

The first bill I would like to comment on is HB 6444-An Act Clarifying The Definition of "Emergency" And "Major Disaster".

This bill makes the definitions of "major disaster" and "emergency" clearer and easier to apply during an emergency situation by redefining "major disaster" to include catastrophes for which the Governor has declared a civil preparedness emergency and by redefining "emergency" to include state-declared emergencies. Currently, the definitions mirror the federal Stafford Act language, to be used only when a disaster or emergency rises to the level of a Presidential declaration. This change reflects the actual usage of these terms on the state level.

The bill also changes the term "local civil preparedness director" to local emergency management director. Although we view the two terms as interchangeable, these individuals—who serve as critical links between local response disciplines, local government, and DEMHS—are most often now referred to as "emergency management" rather than "civil preparedness" directors.

The second bill I would like to comment on is HB 6445-An Act Concerning Emergency Notification Systems. Emergency Notifications Systems are vital information tools in alerting the public of an emergency. The general public would be less likely to sign up for these critical alerts if their contact information was available for other purposes.

This bill would exempt any subscriber or emergency contact information collected for the purposes of an emergency notification system from disclosure under the freedom of information act. The bill also changes how subscriber information can be used from "life threatening emergencies" to "emergency".

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of these two important pieces of legislation.